

Examples of Activities to Promote Higher Order Thinking Skills: Social Studies

Apply a Rule: Given population data that illustrates the principle that the standard of living decreases if population increases without corresponding increase in production, the student could be asked to analyze the data to tell and tell how he is able to determine what effects changing population will have upon the standard of living.

Classify: Given photographs of various people and definitions of racial classes, the student could be asked to classify the photographs according to the races of the people portrayed.

Construct: Given appropriate materials, the student could be asked to construct a model of a city water system.

Define: Given a filmed or taped situation in which several forms of communication are portrayed, the student could be asked to define several categories of communication. His response could include definitions for verbal, non-verbal, pictorial, visual, auditory, or any of several other classes or categories of communication.

Demonstrate: The student could be asked to demonstrate the use of calipers to determine the measurements for obtaining cephalic indices. Or he could be asked to demonstrate use of a compass to determine direction.

Describe: The student could be asked to describe the culture of a particular Indian tribe.
Diagram: The student could be asked to diagram the steps involved in the passage of a bill through the legislature.

Distinguish: Given the names of ancient Greek and Roman gods paired according to function, the student could be asked to distinguish between them.

Estimate: Given the day of the year and the latitude, the student could be asked to estimate the length of daylight at a particular place.

Identify: Given the name of one of the U.S. presidents, and photographs of several, the student could be asked to identify the picture of the one which was named.

Interpret: Given a bar graph that shows production of steel in the U.S. during the last fifty years, the student could be asked to interpret the graph. His response could include references to times of production increases or decreases, total amount of decreases or increases, and differences in production between the years.

Locate: The student could be asked to locate, in time, the first battle of the American Revolution.

Measure: Given a string and a globe with a scale of miles, the student could be asked to measure the scaled distance between any two given points.

Name: The student could be asked to name the factors that contribute to natural population increases.

Order: Given the names of the declared wars in which the U.S. has engaged, the student could be asked to order them according to the time of occurrence.

Predict: The student could be asked to predict the type of economy that could be supported in described geographic regions.

Solve: Given tables of prices and costs, the student could be asked to solve problems related to the law of diminishing returns.

State a Rule: In response to the question: "What controlled the inheritance of family property in the European Middle Ages?" the student would respond with a statement that indicated that property was inherited by the eldest son.

Source: <http://teaching.uncc.edu/resources/best-practice-articles/instructional-methods/promoting-higher-thinking>